

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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SUBJ: DANISH REFUGEE "QUOTA" -- AN INCREASE

SUMMARY: DENMARK HAS ESTABLISHED A REFUGEE "QUOTA" OF SORTS EFFECTIVE JAN 1, 1979. THE QUOTA IS BASED NOT ON NUMBERS OF INDIVIDUALS BUT BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS, AND SHOULD PROVIDE HAVEN IN DENMARK FOR ABOUT 500 REFUGEES A YEAR. VIEWED HISTORICALLY, THIS WILL ALLOW A MODEST INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES ADMITTED TO DENMARK, BUT EQUALLY IMPORTANT WILL ALLOW THE CONTINUAL ACCEPTANCE OF REFUGEES WHEN COMPELLING CIRCUMSTANCES DICTATE -- WITHOUT THE NEED FOR SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS OR QUOTAS. END SUMMARY

1. IN RESPONSE TO REQUESTS FROM FORMER DAN PRIMIN POUL HARTLING, UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, DENMARK HAS ANNOUNCED AN ANNUAL
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REFUGEE QUOTA WHICH WILL TOTAL ABOUT 500 REFUGEES. THE NUMBER TO BE ACCEPTED, STARTING JAN 1, 1979, WILL ULTIMATELY BE DETERMINED BY THE COST OF SUPPORTING REFUGEES DURING THEIR FIRST 18 MONTHS OF INTEGRATION INTO DANISH SOCIETY. IT CURRENTLY COSTS ABOUT DKR. 66,000 (ABOUT DOLLARS 11,700) TO TRANSPORT AND SUPPORT EACH NEW REFUGEE FOR 18 MONTHS, AND A TOTAL OF DKR. 35,000,000 (DOLLARS 6.2 MILLION) HAS BEEN ALLOTTED TO ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM EACH YEAR.

HANDICAPPED REFUGEES ARE MORE COSTLY TO ACCEPT, AND DENMARK FOR SOME YEARS HAS PARTICIPATED IN THE "TEN OR MORE" PROGRAM, HAVING AGREED TO ACCEPT AT LEAST TEN HANDICAPPED REFUGEES ANNUALLY. AFTER THE INITIAL 18 MONTHS, REFUGEES STILL REQUIRING SUPPORT FALL UNDER THE CARE OF NORMAL SOCIAL SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS RATHER THAN THE DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL.

2. DENKARK HAS NOT PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED A QUOTA PER SE, BUT HAD ACCEPTED 120 TO 150 "SPONTANEOUS" REFUGEES EACH YEAR -- NORMALLY PEOPLE ALREADY IN THE COUNTRY FOR OTHER PURPOSES WHO THEN APPLIED FOR ASYLUM. THEY HAVE TRADITIONALLY ACCEPTED ADDITIONAL REFUGEES ON AN AD HOC BASIS IN RESPONSE TO DEVELOPMENTS IN VARIOUS TROUBLED AREAS, AS LAST YEAR'S ADDITIONAL QUOTAS FOR CHILEANS AND VIETNAMEEES. IN 1977 DENMARK ACCEPTED ONLY 227 REFUGEES, THE LOWEST NUMBER SINCE 1968 AND NEARLY HALF OF ITS 20-YEAR AVERAGE, SO IN THAT CONTEXT THE NEW COMMITMENT WILL GREATLY INCREASE ACCEPTED REFUGEE CASES. AN IMPORTANT FACTOR, BEYOND THE NUMERICAL INCREASE, IS THAT THIS REFUGEE PROGRAM IS NOW A FIXED BUDGETARY ITEM AND NOT DEPENDENT ON SPECIAL REQUESTS FOR ITS CONTINUED OPERATION.

3. A WORKING PAPER IS BEING PREPARED IN THE MIN OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS PROPOSING THAT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR THE REMAINDER OF THIS YEAR BE USED FOR NON-CHILEAN LATIN AMERICANS WHO HAVE APPLIED FOR ASYLUM (PRIMARILY BRAZILIANS AND ARGENTINES). A POLISH REFUGEE PROGRAM, INITIATED IN 1969, IS BEING PHASED OUT, BUT A FEW HOLDOVER POLISH FAMILIES MAY STILL QUALIFY THIS YEAR. GIVEN DENMARK'S CONSIDERABLE SHIPPING INTERESTS, SOME FUNDS ARE LIKELY TO BE HELD UNTIL THE FALL IN CASE A DANISH SHIP PICKS UP INDOCHINESE BOAT CASES ON THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIGH SEAS AND CANNOT OFF-LOAD THEM UNLESS DENMARK GUARANTEES THEIR ACCEPTANCE. IT IS REPORTED THAT IN THE PAST SOME A.P. MOLLER SHIPS PICKED UP REFUGEES BUT WERE ABLE TO DEPOSIT THEM AT SOUTH EAST ASIAN PORTS -- IN AT LEAST ONE CASE AFTER PAYMENT OF \$10,000 UNDER THE TABLE. SHOULD THERE BE FEWER QUALIFIED APPLICANTS FOR DANISH REFUGEE FUNDS THAN PROJECTED, DENMARK MAY BE ABLE TO ACCEPT ANOTHER SMALL GROUP OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES LATE IN THE YEAR.

4. WHILE THE SELECTION PROCESS FOR RESETTLEMENT CASES FOR 1979 HAS NOT YET BEEN FORMALIZED, A BOARD WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL AND THE MINISTRIES OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JUSTICE, AND SOCIAL WELFARE IS LIKELY TO BE FORMED TO DECIDE NUMBERS AND GEOGRAPHIC AREAS. SPONTANEOUS CASES ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE AT THE 120-150 LEVEL, BUT EVEN WHILE THEY MAINTAIN SOME "CUSHION" FOR THE UNEXPECTED UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR DENMARK IS LIKELY TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO REFUGEE ASYLUM REQUESTS AS TROUBLES DEVELOP AROUND THE WORLD.

5. COMMENT: DENMARK IS CAUGHT IN THE BIND OF HAVING HUMANITARIAN SYMPATHIES WHILE FACING ECONOMIC AND UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS AT HOME. THE TRADITIONAL GENEROSITY OF THE DANES IS, IN THE CASE OF REFUGEES, SOMEWHAT MODIFIED BY THEIR DESIRE TO REMAIN A HOMOGENEOUS NATION, PLUS THE BAD TASTE SOME STILL HAVE OVER THE SCANDAL REVOLVING AROUND A GROUP OF VIETNAMESE CHILDREN BROUGHT TO

DENMARK IN 1975. DESPITE THEIR GENUINE ANGUISH OVER REFUGEES,
MANY WOULD PREFER TO OPEN THEIR POCKETBOOKS WHILE URGING OTHER
NATIONS TO OPEN THEIR DOORS. DEAN

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